



## County of Inyo Planning Department

Yucca Mountain Repository Assessment Office  
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July 26, 1999

Tom Hallenbeck, Director  
Caltrans District 9  
500 S. Main Street  
Bishop, CA 93514

### **STATE ROUTE 127 NUCLEAR WASTE TRANSPORT RISK ASSESSMENT**

Dear Mr. Hallenbeck,

As you may be aware, the Department of Energy (DOE) has requested that California perform a risk assessment evaluating the potential impact of transportation of low level nuclear waste to the Nevada Test Site via State Route 127. This request originated from a June 3, 1999 meeting of the Western Governor's Association (WGA) and the Department of Energy wherein the DOE indicated (in anticipation of political resistance to and/or legislative prohibition of shipment of low level waste through the Las Vegas Valley or over Hoover Dam) that California State Route 127 or Nevada State Route 160 may be utilized for future shipments of nuclear waste to the Nevada Test Site.

The WGA and DOE have asked that both California and Nevada risk assessments be completed in time for consideration *and comparison* at the October 1999 WGA meeting in San Diego.

Senators Feinstein and Boxer, Congressman Lewis, and the Inyo County Board of Supervisors have taken the position that low level radioactive waste should not be transported along State Route 127. Use of SR127 for transport of such material is not necessary in light of the fact that most waste destined for the Nevada Test Site is generated outside of California and east of Nevada and can be readily transported to the site using proven, long-standing radioactive waste transport routes.

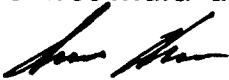
Additionally, should the transport of low level waste on SR 127 become accepted and routine, use of this corridor for eventual delivery of high-level nuclear waste to the Yucca Mountain Repository could follow, with associated increases in risk to human health.

Agencies with jurisdiction over transportation, land use and emergency response in the SR 127 corridor need to rapidly come together to develop the necessary risk analysis in the short time allocated to this project. Failure to make a concerted and thorough analysis of risks posed by use of SR127 for radioactive materials transport could lead DOE to underestimate - in the absence of sufficient information - the potential impact to Inyo County and San Bernardino County communities and resources.

Per DOE's request, the risk assessments done by both states would be based upon the DOE Transportation External Coordination (TEC) Working Group paper "Routing Transportation: Discussion and Recommendations". This document provides a general framework for risk analysis but does not specify the actual format or contents of the assessment.

Given the very small amount of time we have to complete this project, I would like to ask that you consider the immediate allocation of Caltrans staff to this project, to work in coordination with myself, San Bernardino County, the California Energy Commission, National Park Service and emergency responders within the affected area. Caltrans' expertise in roadway risk assessment is central to the success of this project.

I would appreciate it if you or designated staff would contact me at (760)878-0447 at your earliest convenience to discuss arrangements for the first multi-agency meeting.



Andrew Remus, Project Coordinator  
Inyo County Yucca Mountain Assessment Office

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